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MARGARET OF ANJOU AND HER RELATION TO THE WARS OF THE ROSES

BY

DAISY DEAN DRYDEN

A. B. University of Kansas, 1905

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

IN HISTORY

IN

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

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MARGARET OF ANJOU, AND HER RELATION TO THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

Chapter I.

"'Tis beauty that doth oft make women proud;
But, God He knows, thy share thereof is small.
'Tis virtue that doth make them most admired;
The contrary doth make this wondered at.
'Tis government that makes them seem divine;
The want thereof makes thee abominable.
Thou art as opposite to every good
As the Antipodes are unto us,
Or as the south to the septentrion
O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide."[1]

Of all the foreign queens who have sat upon the throne of England, Margaret of Anjou was least in sympathy with her adopted people; such is the viewpoint of all English Chroniclers. She came to England a stranger to the customs and interests of the country, nor did she ever try to learn their ways or win their affection. It is Margaret of Anjou whom the English have to thank for the bitterness and excessive cruelty of the Wars of the Roses, if not for the wars themselves; for they claim she was satisfied with nothing but the utter disgrace and ruin of her

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1. Shakespeare Henry VI, Part III, Act I, Scene IV, 128-137.

opponents. As a hated Frenchwoman she came to them and as a hated Frenchwoman she left them, ransomed by her cousin, the French King.

Margaret of Anjou was born March 23, 1430, perhaps at Nancy, as the place of her birth is not positively known. She was the fourth daughter of King René of Anjou and his wife Isabella, daughter and heiress of Charles II, Duke of Lorraine and a niece of King Charles VII of France. Her childhood was spent in the care of her able and spirited mother, who governed the Duchies of Bar and Lorraine, while her father René was held a prisoner by Anthony of Vaudemont, a rival claimant for Lorraine. In 1435, she was taken to Anjou which was then being ruled by her grandmother, Yolande of Aragon, in René's name; here, she remained until her marriage in 1445 to Henry VI of England.[1]

At the time of her birth, her father possessed nothing except the small country of Guise; but within a very short time he fell heir to quite extended possessions, the Duchy of Bar, the Marquisate of Pont-a-Mousson and the Duchy of Lorraine. In 1434, he succeeded to the Duchy of Anjou and the Country of Provence, and in the next year, 1435, Joanne II of Naples left him her right to Naples along with the empty titles of Hungary and Jerusalem, Majorca and Minorca.

Although of small possessions, his influence at the French court was not small, as his sister was the queen of France and his brother, Charles of Anjou, was one of the King's chief advisors. For that reason alone, almost from her cradle, a series

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1. Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. 36, 138.

of marriages was proposed for Margaret. In February, 1433, her father consented that Margaret should marry a son of the count of Saint Pol; but, later, he was released from this agreement. In 1435, Philip of Burgundy, René's captor, urged that Margaret should be wedded to his young son, the Count of Charolais. In 1442, Philip of Burgundy negotiated with Isabella for the marriage of Margaret with his kinsman, Charles, Count of Nevers.[1] But, the most tempting prospects for her were now offered from another quarter, from England, which ended in her marriage to King Henry VI of England in 1445.

This marriage was especially urged by the representatives of the peace party in England because Margaret was thought to possess such characteristics as would enable her to carry out their policy through the incapable King.[2] Yet, England's greatest need at this time was a mediator, some one to pacify the two rival parties, each striving to control the weak king, while she became a strong partizan favoring a policy which proved ruinous for England under existing conditions.

It might be of interest to review briefly the conditions in England which led up to this Angevin marriage, a marriage which united two peoples so unlike and from which the peace party of England had hoped so much, but which in the end alienated Henry from his people and, perhaps, deprived the Lancastrians of their throne.

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1. Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. 36, 139.
2. Vickers, England in the Later Middle Age, 420.

After almost one hundred years of war, there arose in England a party loudly demanding peace, opposed to it was another party advocating a more vigorous foreign policy and especially war with France. King Henry VI had just come to maturity; during his youth, the realm had been managed by his able and honest uncle, John, Duke of Bedford, and after his death by Cardinal Beaufort. They had always advocated a peace policy for England, which policy was strictly in keeping with Henry's ideas, and they had sought to marry Henry to a French princess as the best means of securing the triumph of their party. As early as 1439 this policy was suggested.

At first, the French were suspicious of their actions as involving a renewal of the alliance between England and the old feudal party in France. The idea was warmly taken up by King Henry, but as violently opposed by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Henry's ardent love of peace, associated in his mind with the principles of christianity and religion, on which he desired his government to be founded, caused him to give ready ear to politicions who offered to point out a way of terminating the long-standing war with France.[1]

After urgent pressure by the King, Willian de la Pole - Earl of Suffolk was appointed to go to France to "Treat about a truce[2] and further to negotiate about the Angevin marriage."

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1. Stubbs, Constitutional History of England, III, 130-132.

2. Rymer's Foedera, XI, 60-63.

The lady was Margaret of Anjou, daughter of René, Duke of Lorraine and titular King of Hungary and Jerusalem, a man of more influence than possessions as stated above. At first, Suffolk objected to the commission, undoubtedly realizing it was a delicate task and feeling that whatever arrangements he could make, would be rejected by the English people. English prejudice might be expected to view such a marriage with dislike, not only because Margaret was related to the French King, but because the compact of her marriage included a cession of territory to her father; and, in consideration of René's poverty, Henry was to accept his daughter without a marriage portion.[1] At last, Suffolk accepted the commission in February, 1444, but only after Parliament had agreed to pardon every error of judgment which he might commit on the occasion.[2]

This assembly of delegates at "Tours for a peace to be had between England and France, was great, but the cost was much greater,"[3] and though a peace proved impossible, Margaret was betrothed to King Henry VI on the basis of a paltry truce for two years in the hopes that this might lead to a final pacification.[4] The treaty also provided that the Duchy of Anjou and the County of Maine should be given to her father; that Margaret should bring to her husband her father's shadowry rights to the Kingdom

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1. Gairdner, Houses of Lancanter and York, 148. Hall's Chronicle, 204.
2. Rymer's Foedera, XI, 53.
3. Hall's Chronicle, 203.
4. Holinshed's Chronicle, 206.

of Minorca and Majorca, while renouncing all her claims to the rest of her father's heritage.[1] Her real present to her husband was peace and alliance with France. It is very probably that this concession of territory seemed strange to Suffolk "because the King of England occupied a great part of the Duchy of Anjou and the whole of Maine, as was alledged to King Reiner having only the name and stile of those realms without anie penie, profit or foot of possession".[2]

A proxy marriage was performed by the Bishop at Toul, in Touraine with Suffolk representing his King. There was at this ceremony Margaret's father and mother, the King and Queen of France and many others of high rank in both kingdoms. The feasts and gaieties lasted for several days and were carried out with great pomp and ceremony.[3]

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1. There are contradictory accounts of this transaction. Vicker (England in The Later Middle Age, 420.) says that Suffolk surrendered all English possessions in France to the French except Normandy and Guienne and that the French forced these concessions from him when they saw how anxious he was to make terms with them. Stubbs (Constitutional History, Vol. III, 133.) says that the Privy Council all along knew on what terms the French would make this alliance, but kept it from the public. Holinshed (Chronicle, 206.) says Suffolk adventured somewhat upon his commission without the assent of his associates. Hall (Chronicle, 204.) "Suffolk either corrupted with bribes or too much affectionate to this unprofitable marriage, condescended and agreed to their motion."

2. Holinshed's Chronicle, 206.

3. Ibid, 207.

Accompanied by Suffolk and a very numerous and brilliant following which King Henry had provided,[1] Margaret left for England. On her way through Normandy, Henry's possessions in France, she was royally received by Richard, Duke of York and Governor of Normandy, as she was all the way through France. The retinue crossed the English Channel on the cog, John of Cherbourg, arriving April 9, 1445, at Portsmouth with Margaret, "sick of the labour and indisposition of the sea, by the occasion of which the pokkes had broken out upon her."[2] It was reported in England that she had the smallpox, which to them was a very unhappy augury, nor could they forget it even amid the magnificance of her marriage and her coronation.[3]

She was joined by the King at Southampton and on April 23, 1445, Bishop Ayscough of Salisbury repeated the marriage service at Tichfield Abbey amid nuptial ceremonies of the greatest magnificance. On the eighteenth day of May she came to London, welcomed by all the lords of England, and, especially, by the Duke of Gloucester, who had been bitterly opposed to the marriage. "Here goodlie pageants and sundrie gallant historical shewes were given in her honour and all the people of all occupations, in blew gownes imbrodered with some devise, expressing their art and trades whereby to be known, did all show themselves and welcomed her."[4]

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1. Toward the end of the year 1444 commissioners were sent into several counties to borrow money for the expenses of conducting the Queen to England and for her coronation (Acts of the Privy Council, Vol. VI, 322.) As early as January, 1445, a ring of "gold garnished with a fair ruby" which had been given to the King by his uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, was delivered to a goldsmith "to break and thereof to make another ring for the Queen's wedding ring."(Foedera, XI, 76.)
2. Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council, Vol. XI. XV.
3. Vickers, England in the Later Middle Age, 420
4. Holinshed's Chronicle, 207.

When Margaret came to England she was but sixteen years old, good looking, well gowned, and well brought up. She was full of pride, spirit, ambition and intelligence. She had the inclination to rule and from the first, King Henry was more than willing to trust and in fact almost to relinquish his rank as sovereign to his clever, lively and strong-willed wife.

Henry was a pious well-intentioned nonentity, twenty three years old, a mere puppet in the hands of his ministers. The Beauforts, realizing his weakness, sought to secure for him a queen who would mould him to the shape they desired; for well they knew he had not one qualification for the place he was to fill: weak in body, precocious rather than strong in mind, with hereditary insanity already telling in his over-worked body; pure, merciful and patient and without doubt most innocent of all the evils that befell England because of him. Seldom will one ever find two people more unlike than Queen Margaret and King Henry, her masculine talents and ambition forming a striking contrast to her husband's meekness and timidity.[1]

1. Oman, Political History of England, IV, 334.

CHAPTER II.

For the moment peace and the young queen were as yet new and popular, and the restoration of commerce with France was a great boon. The chief aim of Parliament was to carry out its policy of peace and it thanked Suffolk and recommended him to the King for his special favor.[1]

Margaret at once began to take an active part in every thing around her. It is said that her first political act was to write to the French King urging him to favor a continued peace with England. "For no greater pleasure can we have in this world than to see an arrangement for a final peace between King Henry and you, as well for the nearness of lineage in which you stand, the one to the other, as also for the relief and repose of the christian people which has so long been disturbed by war."[2] Young and inexperienced though she was, she entered the game in the spirit which her supporters had wished. She became sincerely attached to Suffolk and through her influence he became the King's leading councillor. At the same time she began to look upon Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, as her natural enemy; she hated him as the foe of Suffolk and the Beauforts and as the possible successor of her husband. Unfortunately for Margaret and for the nation she never got beyond the partisans' view of her position.

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1. Stubbs, Constitutional History, Vol. III, 133.
2. Wars of the English in France, Vol. I, 164.

She was very clever in drawing all her friends into an inner circle of the King's Council, often called the Privy Council, and expelling all those who were in any way hostile to its policy.

Especially did this apply to the King's uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, and every effort was made to poison the King's mind against his near kinsman. When he was found dead in his lodgings after his arrest for treason in 1447, murmurings of suspicion pointed toward the queen.[1] We hesitate to say that she played any part in this crime, for she was only eighteen, though already a good partisan and a good fighter. It must be admitted she was very determined to get her share in his forfeited estates.[2] The death of Gloucester was the complement of the Angevin marriage. "This began the trouble in the realm of England for the death of this noble Duke, and all the communes of the realm began to murmur for it and were not content."[3]

Naturally under such circumstances the government became unpopular. Peace did not come with France. War was renewed in 1449 but was so disastrous to the English that within two years they were driven from every foot of French soil, except their old stronghold of Calais. The loss of their conquests in France only

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1. It may have been a natural death produced or accelerated by the insult of the arrest. Stubbs. Constitutional History, Vol. III, 136.

2. Rymer's Foedera. XI, 155. Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 77.

3. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age, 418.

made conditions worse at home, the governing party getting the blame for it all. The mass of the people had suffered from a succession of bad harvests; pestilence followed and it became necessary to make some efforts to relieve the wants of the people. Meanwhile the extravagance of the Queen and her ministers had drained the exchequer almost to the last penny.[1]

There was rivalry among the chiefs of the great families for the control of the king. Of such families there were several that boasted royal blood and were very near to the throne, the descent of one among them - the House of York,- was even more royal, from the heriditary point of view, than that of the reigning Lancastrian line. The other leading houses were the Beauforts and the Nevilles. It is in the strife between these rival houses that Margaret of Anjou played a leading part.

Within a very short time after the death of Gloucester, his old rival, Cardinal Beaufort, also died. The suggestion that Gloucester had been murdered and the fact that Beaufort so soon followed him to the grave, made a deep impression on the popular imagination. Complaints began to be openly heard against Suffolk and his policy. So serious did the situation seem to him that he appealed to the King.[2]

The murder of Suffolk in 1449 was a great blow to Margaret. She was just as unpopular as he had been earlier, and the worst kind of reports had been circulated about her and Suffolk. His

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1. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age, 420.

2. Stubbs, Constitutional Hist., Vol. IV, 142.

place in the Privy Council was now taken by Somerset. But before long, Normandy was lost to the English and this reverse was followed quickly by the loss of Quienne; for these disasters the blame was laid on Somerset, who soon became as much disliked as Suffolk had been. This affected Margaret's position very much: she came as the representative of the policy of peace with France, but that policy had been carried out with such little success that England had lost all her possessions in France and had been brought to the brink of Civil War at home.[1]

In 1450, the year after the murder of Suffolk, there began to be heard a popular demand for the return of Richard, Duke of York, who was now the leader of the opposition to the government; through Margaret's influence he had been excluded from any important part in the royal administration and had been given office in Ireland where he would not prove troublesome.[2] Margaret especially hated him because he was the heir presumptive to the throne. This popular demand was shown in a rebellious demonstration set on foot in Kent under the leadership of Jack Cade, who with some twenty thousand men held possession of London for three days and beheaded Lord Say, one of the Most obnoxious of the King's ministers.[3]

Opposed to the Duke of York was the Duke of Somerset, popularly discredited, yet backed by Margaret in any policy he advocated. Through her efforts he was released from the Tower at

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1. Dictionary of National Biography. Vol. 36, 141.
2. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age. 434.
3. Ibid, 434; Holinshed's Chronicle. 220; 225

this time and again made chief of the council. When in prison she visited him, assuring him that she would still give him her favor.[1]

It was during the time that Somerset was confined to the Tower that Margaret began to take an active part in government, even to the details of the administration. On his release from prison there began the contest for the control of the weak King's council between Richard, Duke of York, who had come back from Ireland, in spite of the Queen's friends to way lay him, and the Duke of Somerset, with Queen Margaret supporting him, on the other.

It was at this time that Margaret showed the predominating traits of her character, not only in her ideas about the government, but also in matters strictly private. Interference in the private affairs of the gentry seemed to be especially interesting to her and among them she was considered as an untiring match-maker[2]. She begged for a dowry from Cardinal Beaufort's executors for two "poure creatures" who desired to be wedded and at another time remonstrated with a recalcitrant parent who had refused consent to his daughter's marriage.[3] Her letters show her ever eager for favors, greedy in her requests and unscrupulous in pushing the interests of her friends and servants; but they also show her to be a hearty foe toward those whom she disliked.[4]

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1. Waurin. Vol. V, 264-265.
2. Paston Letters. I 253-254. Letters of Margaret. 89; 112.
3. Vickers, England In The Middle Age. 444.
4. Letters of Margaret. 113, 116, 119, 160.

Poor and greedy she always evaded the custom duties and petitioned for the same privilege for her friends[1]. She meddled in the course of private justice,[2] and was an ardent lover of the chase, continually asking the keepers of the forests to keep the game for her special use.[3] Then also she became interested in the founding of Queen's College, Cambridge, to offset Henry's founding of King's College. But to accomplish this the only step she took was to petition the King for the re-establishment of a school already started which she asked to have called "Queen's College" after herself.[4]

Just as Margaret was becoming an important factor in the general management of affairs, the course of events gave her a different position. King Henry became insane in August, 1453, and this put an end to the personal rule of Margaret and Somerset, as a regent now was necessary. Also a son was born to her October 13, and the birth of an heir to the throne made things more interesting for all concerned.[5] Margaret petitioned Parliament that she be appointed to the office of regent, but she was so unpopular with the people, that this request could not be granted. A popular poem about her ran as follows:

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1. Letters of Margaret. 123.
2. Ibid. 124, 119.
3. Ibid. 90, 100, 103.
4. Patent Rolls, Henry VI, 1446-1452, 143.
5. Holinshed's Chronicle. 236-238.

"Also scripture saithe, woe be to that regyon
Where ys a king unwyse or innocent;
Moreover it ys right a gret abusion
A woman of a land to be a regent,
Quene Margrete I mene, that ever hathe ment
To goverme alle England with might and poure,
And to destroye the ryght lyne was here entent,
Wherfore sche hathe a fal, to here gret langoure.

And now sche ne rought, so that sche myght attayne,
Though alle Engeland were brought to confusyon,
Sche and here wykked affynité certayne
Entende uttyrly to destroye thys region;
For with them ys but dethe and destruccion,
Robberye and vengeaunce, with alle rygour,
Therfore alle that holde of that appynioun,
God sende him a schort ende with meche langour."[1]

The appointment of Richard, Duke of York, to be regent only intensified the bitter personal rivalry between York and Margaret; and for the first time Margaret now found herself entirely without influence in the affairs of the kingdom,[2] which she had in fact ruled for years in her husband's name. The birth of the Prince Edward had deprived the Duke of York of any hopes he might have had of a peaceful succession to the throne on Henry's death, while it inspired Margaret with a new and fiercer zeal on behalf of her family interests, always standing out as the champion of her son's and husband's rights.[3]

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1. Political Songs and Poems of the Middle Ages, II, 268.
2. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age, 441.
3. Dictionary of Natio al Biography, Vol. 36, 141.

Henry's return to sanity in January, 1455, deprived York of his protectorate. The recovery of the king might seem to be a matter for rejoicing, but in reality it precipitated the outbreak of Civil War, as Queen Margaret was in complete control of him when he was in his very feeble senses. She strove to control the government in her husband's name and we may well suspect that she was a far more important element in the struggle than the incompetent Somerset, who, nevertheless, was at once released from confinement, where York had placed him, to be used as a convenient tool. York and his supporters were deprived of all power and a council was called "for surtee of the King's most noble person,[1] which York rightly took as a menance to his safety. Margaret had made war inevitable by transforming loyalty to the king's person into a party cry. At last York was forced to take up arms to protect himself, and both sides gathered together their retainers. Letters had been sent to the chancellor and to the king in which the Yorkists justified their appearance in arms as a protective measure; but Somerset was careful that they should not reach the king. York's victory in the first battle of St. Albans, May 22, 1455, was marked by Somerset's death.[2]

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1. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age, 445.
2. Ibid, England in The Later Middle Age, 445; Holinshed's Chronicle. 240.

CHAPTER III.

The Battle of St. Albans had but one permanent result, it forced the Queen forward as the head of the royal party. But for the moment the Yorkists were supreme, yet with no new policy, no great reforms; they were content to emphasize their position as heirs to the peace party and to govern in the King's name. The King forgave York and Parliament declared him and his friends good and faithful subjects.[1]

Again, in June, 1456, the King was once more sick with a return of his old malady and York was again appointed protector to the utter disregard of Margaret. He was released from this position by Parliament in the following October[2], when the King was once more able to perform the duties of royalty. King Henry wished especially that York be retained as his chief councillor but Margaret would not consent to it. "The Queen is a great and strong laboured woman, for she spareth no pain to sue her things to an intent and conclusion to her power.[3]

Despite the Queen's intrigues and the cessation of the protectorate, she was not able to attack York openly. At this time, there was no government in any real sense of the word and

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 242.
2. Waurin, 268.
3. Paston Letters, I, 378.

the meetings of the Privy Council went unrecorded. Beyond doubt it was the influence of the Duke of Buckingham which prevented Margaret from following up this dismissal by an attack to destroy him and for more than two years he was so anxious for peace that he simply tolerated whatever she might do.[1] Disgusted at her husband's favorable treatment of York she left London, spent April and May at Tutbury, and visited her son's Earldom at Chester, no doubt making preparations for a new attack on York. In August she induced Henry to join her in the midlands away from London and York's influence.[2]

In the domestic affairs of the kingdom, these were years of much trouble. The outlying parts of the country were scenes of private warfare and other forms of discord. "The realm of England was out of all good governance; the King was simple and led by covetous councillors and owed more than he was worth. From these misgovernances the hearts of the people were turned from them that had the land in governance and their blessing was turned to cursing. The Queen and such as were of her affinity ruled the land as they pleased, gathering riches innumerable. The officers of the realm, for to enrich themselves plundered poor people and disinherited rightful heirs and did many wrongs. The Queen was defamed, that he that was called the Prince, was not the King's son, but a bastard gotten in adultery. As there was no

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1. Oman, Political History of England. Vol. IV, 370.
2. Dictionary of National Biography. Vol. 36, 141.

Parliament there, there was no means to bring pressure to bear upon the King or his ministers. Even war itself would be better than this weary waiting for it."[1]

In 1458, an effort was made to reconcile the rival parties, and the Duke of York walked with Margaret to a thanksgiving service at St. Pauls[2]; but the hatreds were so deep and bitter that no one save the guiltless King could believe that it could last. And it is astonishing that the suspension of arms lasted as long as it did, but the King's personal influence was all for peace. It was only by dint of constant suasion and malevolent suggestion that his wife could drive him on to action and reluctantly he was forced to take up the Queen's quarrel.

Although York's position was now weakened, since he was no longer first prince of the blood, and since he could no longer pose as the deliverer of his sovereign from a minister, now dead, who had threatened the ruination of England. Even though it was a perilous thing to attack the crown itself, York eventually did so when he was hunted to desperation by the Queen who had taken Somerset's place as the head of the clique which managed the king and misconducted the affairs of the realm.[3]

These three years of the Queen's rule were a time of misery and mortification for England. The Queen and her friends were too much occupied in watching York and maturing their schemes against

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1. Chron. ed. Davies, 79. (quoted by Oman)
2. Holinshed's Chronicle, 249.
3. Oman, Political History of England. Vol. IV, 373.

him to have much energy left for directing the external or internal policy of the realm. Their only aim was the overthrow of York and his friends. To show the unconstitutional character of their governance, it is sufficient to say they did not call a single Parliament during this time and the Great Council only once or twice, because of the Lancastrian majority among the lords. Margaret with French traditions behind her did not think it necessary to adopt the fiction of working through Parliament. She knew that the predominating factor in the political life of the nation was the power of the magnates; but she did not understand how important is tradition, how people are often satisfied with the shadow instead of the substance of liberty. It was Margaret's use of the great council instead of Parliament which threw the cloak of constitutionalism around the aristocratic Yorkist Party.[1]

The best illustration of the intrique and counter intrigue going on, is to be found in the disastrous foreign policy of the country for which the Queen, perhaps without faudation, was believed to have been more or less responsible. Sandwick and Fowey were captured and sacked by the French fleet, the attacking force meeting no opposition whatever. There is no doubt that Margaret was, at the time, for her own personal and dynastic ends, in communication with Charles VII of France, the national enemy, and her detractors drew the deduction that the information as to the defenceless state of the south coast, had been obtained from her.

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1. Vickers, England in the Later Middle Age, 448.

Also James II of Scotland suggested to Charles VII of France a simultaneous attack on Calais and Berwick as early as June, 1455, and again in the following year. Margaret, no doubt, encouraged her countrymen to invade England in the hopes of discrediting the Yorkist government.[1]

It was not until the spring of 1459 that Margaret thought herself ready to strike, although she had been plotting and intriguing directly after the reconciliation. By April she was openly making levies under the privy seal. In Cheshire she was distributing the badge of the Swan[2] to all who would wear it and she did not neglect to provide bow-staves and arrows. "But she could not bring her purpose about." Her unpopularity caused the revival of those whispers which had greeted the birth of her son.[3]

At last in the summer of 1459 both parties were again at war. Henry's march on Ludlow was followed by the dispersal of the Yorkists and their leaders fled from the country. The Lancastrians in their wrath sacked Ludlow. "Truly it was a strange way for an army fighting in defense of legitimate royalty to treat one of its master's towns."[4] At once the Queen directed her husband to issue writs for the assembling of Parliament which had not met for three years. From the most unblushing packing of the assembly, Margaret was able to carry through any measure that pleased her. Its chief work was to pass a bill of attainder against the Yorkists; but,

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1. Oman, Political History of England, 374; Holinshed's Chronicle, 244.
2. The "Swan" had been Gloucester's badge and was adopted for the young prince.
3. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age, 450.
4. Ibid, 451.

the King when assenting to the bill, declared he reserved the right to pardon such as he chose. Also at this Parliament all the lords were compelled to swear allegiance to the King, to protect the Queen and to acknowledge Prince Edward as heir to the throne.[1]

It was now recognized that the struggle had become dynastic, but the nation as a whole took little interest in victory of one side or the other. Yet Lancastrian constitutional theory was wearing rather thin under the influence of a foreign Queen, who issued commissions of array and attempted to raise money by privy seals, which were strong reasons in driving the people of Kent to look to the Yorkists. Ships diserted the flag of Margaret and joined Warwick at Calais and York in Ireland. Popular ballads appeared in public places, "openly referring to the clique of the Queen and her paramours who ruled the stupid King, with the implication that York ought to be accepted as heir.[2]

It was soon known throughout all England that the Queen's party was in alliance with the French, no less than with the wild Irish. Although the government had received ample warning of the growing discontent and a threatened Yorkist invasion of the South, Margaret and King Henry spent their time liesurely in the Midlands; they were making no preparations for an armed force, and as usual there was a scarcity of money in the treasury.[3]

Before landing, the Yorkist invaders published a manifesto

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 253.
2. Vickers, England in The Later Middle Age, 453.
3. Oman, Political History of England, Vol. IV. 388.

which clearly stated their reasons for attack: the loss of France, the exlusion of the King's relatives from his council; the cruel oppression of the Queen's favorites, and the leaguing of the ministers with the wild Irish and the French. The invasion of Kent was followed by the Battle of Northampton, the captivity of the King, the Duke of York's claim to the crown, and the compromise devised by the lords that King[1] Henry should reign for life while York should be recognized as his successor. Nothing was said about Prince Edward and the people were thus confirmed in their previous supposition that the supposed Prince was no true son of the King.

When Queen Margaret heard that Henry was captured, with her son and several other persons, she fled to her brother-in-law, the Earl of Penbroke at Harleck castle, whence she went into Scotland where the Queen of Scotland received her in royal state. She was robbed on the way in Lancashire of all her goods to the value of ten thousand marks.[2] At once she began to summon her adherents for a new effort, and had agents working for her cause in Wales and Yorkshire. At Dumfries she concluded a treaty of alliance with the Scottish regency[3] by which she was to obtain a Scottish contingent at the price of surrendering Berwick, that prized border stronghold, the key to the northern frontier; she also arranged for the marriage of Edward, Prince of Wales, with the daughter of the King of Scotland.[4]

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 260; 265.
2. Ibid. 261.
3. Waurin, 1447-1471, 355.
4. This alliance with the Scottish Queen was borken off through the influence of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, her uncle, some time later.

In the meanwhile the battle of Wakefield was fought and York and his son, the Earl of Rutland, were killed.[1] Their bodies were mutilated and their heads placed over the south gate at York, adorned with a crown of gold paper.[2] Early in 1461, Margaret again marched southward at the head of a motley host of Scottish, Welsh, and other foreign mercenaries, plundering the country and burning the towns as they advanced. She was met at St. Albans, February 17, 1461, by a Yorkish force, which had come from London with King Henry, and in the encounter, utterly defeated her opponents and obtained possession of her husband. Margaret brutally made her young son, Prince Edward, now seven years of age, president of the court which condemned and executed Sir Thomas Quirel and his son. "Fair son, what death shall these two knights die", and the Prince replied that their heads should be cut off.[3] After the disinheritance of her son, Margaret's already stern and bitter character grew more ruthless. Nor was there any one about her who showed any spirit of moderation, and from now on to the end of the strife, we find only a blood fend between two reckless factions.

The way was now open to London. But while Margaret was parleying with her husband, who begged her not to allow his capital to be sacked by her undisciplined troops, an unexpected Yorkist force got possession of the city and she was forced to retreat northward.[4]

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 268-9; Waurin, 326.
2. Vicker's (England in the Later Middle Age), 457 says Margaret was in Scotland when the battle of Wakefield was fought and so was not responsible for the treatment of these bodies. No reference is given as to his information.
3. Waurin. Vol. V., 330.
4. Holinshed's Chronicle, 271.

After the death of the Duke of York, Warwick, who had really for a long time been the actual head of the opposition, became its acknowledged leader. He did not hesitate now as to a change of dynasty and at once induced Edward, Earl of March, and now Duke of York, to take the throne.[1] There was no formal election, no parliamentary recognition; the character of royalty was regarded as complete. His accession was strictly a legitimate restoration. But such a claim could not have been accepted only on two conditions: the House of York was strong in the character and reputation of Duke Richard and the House of Lancaster was weak in every way. The nation accepted it because they had no great love for the King, because it distrusted the Queen, the ministers and the policy; and because it had exhausted its strength and longed for peace.

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 276.

CHAPTER IV.

The most pressing danger to the young King was the Lancastrian army in the north under the management of Margaret which she had been collecting while Edward was being crowned king in London. On March 29, 1461, she was defeated at Towton by Edward's forces, but both she and King Henry escaped into Scotland,[1] where they were received and entertained by the Scottish King; in return for these courtesies, Berwick was surrendered to Scotland.

A short time after this, in April 1462, observing that the Scottish court was veering round to the side of King Edward, (for the Scottish queen was doing her uttermost to bring about an understanding with the Yorkists) Margaret, leaving her feeble-minded husband in Scotland, went to France[2] to appeal to her relatives and friends. She had no money and borrowed from the queen of Scotland the funds to pay for her journey, giving her gold plate as security. She landed in Brittany, where she was well received by the Duke, who gave her twelve thousand crowns. Thence she went to her father René in Anjou and thence on to the Court of France.[3]

Charles VII of France, her old friend, was now dead and his son Louis XI was hardly yet in a position to help his cousin;[4]

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 278.
2. Ibid, 279.
3. Fortescue's Governance of England (Plummer's Introduction), 59.
4. Dictionary of National Biography. Vol. 36, 143.

yet, entirely through her own unaided influence, she finally induced him to give her a small force under the leadership of her old friend, Peter de Brezy, seneschol of Normandy. Her father was in very poor circumstances at this time and had even been forced to borrow the money to entertain her. She made a formal treaty with King Louis of France, according to which he was to give her this small force and she in return was to give a conditioned mortgage on Calais.[1]

Margaret and her allies landed in Northumberland, October, 1462; at the same time the Earl of Penbroke was gathering troops in Ireland for the invasion of England in her behalf. The young Duke of Somerset had also been commissioned to collect troops for her in the north; but as he had become reconciled to King Edward, no help came from him. She had hoped to accomplish great things, but no sooner had she landed than "she became afraid of her own shadow and the whole army returned to their ships only to be so tossed around by a tempest that all were driven back to shore and fled cowardly to an island called 'Holy Island', where they were so assailed by Edward's retinue that many were slain and others taken for ransoume."[2]

Margaret, with the help of a fisherman, escaped to Berwick, and succeeded in raising men to garrison the fort until she and her followers were recued. "This chaunce little amazed the queen

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1. Holinshed's Chronicle, 280; Waurin, Vol. V. 431.
2. Hall's Chronicle, 259.

ner in any way abated her haute corage."[1] She soon collected a large company of Scots and others of her friends and with her husband entered Northumberland again. They failed to accomplish anything for King Edward raised a large army and forced the Quaen's forces back into Scotland. He erected bulwarkes and fortresses and placed spies wherever he thought an army might land and forbade everybody to receive the said queen nor in any way to help her. King Henry boldly entered England and, stupid as ever, was recognized, captured, and placed in the Tower, only for a few months again to be restored to light and liberty.[2]

Margaret was again reduced to the uttermost straits. In attempting to escape into Scotland with her son and a small member of attendants, she was captured by a robber in a large forest; throwing herself upon the outlaw's generosity, she begged him to save the son of a king. The brigand respected her rank and misfortunes and allowed her to escape.[3] After Margaret heard of her husband's capture in England, she realized the uselessness of further resistance, and leaving Scotland, sailed for France.

And so was the crown lost to the Lancastrians. Without Margaret of Anjou, Henry VI might have reigned as long as he lived and perhaps have outlined the exhaustion under which the nation

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1. Hall's Chronicle, 260.
2. Ibid, 259.
3. Waurin. Vol. V, 435.

after the struggle with France, was labouring. But he never seemed to have looked upon his royal character as involving the responsibility of leadership; he yielded at every pressure, trusted implicitly in every pretended reconciliation and acted as if his position as a constitutional monarch involved his acting as the puppet of each temporary majority.

King Henry might with another wife, have transmitted his crown to his posterity as Henry V. had done. But in Margaret, from the very moment of her arrival, was concentrated the weakness and strength of the dynastic cause; its strength in her indomitable will, her steady faithfulness, her heroic defence of the rights of her husband and child; its weakness in her political position, her policy and her ministers. To the nation she symbolized the loss of Henry V's conquests, an inglorious peace, the humiliation of the popular Gloucester, and the promotion of the unpopular Beauforts. Her domestic policy was one of jealous exclusion. Her strong partisanship made her many bitter enemies. She was drawn to the Beauforts and to Suffolk by the knowledge that their interests were one with the interests of the dynasty. She supported them against all attacks and when they perished, continued the policy which they had begun. Still she might have held out, especially, if she had known how to use the pliancy and simplicity of her husband. But when the nation began to believe that she was in league with the national enemies; when she began to wage Civil War, pitting the north against the south and it was believed that her northern army was induced to follow her by the hope of being allowed to plunder the rich southern farms and cities; when she stirred up,

the Irish against the Duke of York, the French against Calais, and the Scots against the peace of England, she lost all the ground that was left her. It was not that Henry had ruled ill- but that he had gradually failed to rule at all.[1]

After the capture of King Henry and the departure of Margaret from England, Edward IV attempted to restore order in the distracted kingdom, and with no small degree of success. His first Parliament accused Henry, Margaret, and a few of their friends of high treason and passed bills of attainder against them. The most serious charges in Margaret's bill of attainder were that she had surrendered Berwick to the Scots and that she had sanctioned the misconduct of her troops.[2] King Henry was condemned to forfeit the Duchy of Lancaster, his patrimonial estate. King Edward distributed the possessions of those who had taken active part with King Henry, to his favorites and soldiers; but many of his adversaries were pardoned and by so doing he obtained the good will of many men, both from the masses and from the nobility.

While negotiations were going on for a royal marriage for Edward with the sister of the French Queen, through Warwick who had been sent to France for the purpose,[3] Edward secretly married Elizabeth Wydville, the widowed daughter of the Lancastrian Lord Ribers, who had gone over to the Yorkists as soon as Edward was crowned. This marriage with a French princess was especially desired in England because by such an alliance Margaret would be

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1. Stubbs, Constitutional History of England. Vol. III, 194-198.
2. Dictionary of National Biography. Vol. 36. 143.
3. Halls Chronicle, 263-4; Waurin, Vol. II, 456.

deprived of even the hope of aid from the French Court. Naturally Warwick was furious at what King Edward had done. He realized that he would lose his hold upon the young King and saw that Edward hoped to be King of the whole nation in uniting the interests of the Yorkists and the Lancastrians, and not the leader of a faction.[1] From this time, King Edward and the Earl of Warwick drifted apart, each always suspicious of the other. The King raised his wife's relatives to the highest positions in the realm in utter disregard of Warwick and others who had helped him to the throne.

Warwick now began to scheme for the restoration of Henry VI to his throne and persuaded the King's two brothers to join sides with Henry against their own brother.[2] To consummate the plan he married his daughter to the Duke of Clarence, a brother of King Edward. He stirred up rebellion in England, and in the end, having convinced Margaret of his good faith, joined with her and the French King against Edward.[3]

While these events were thus developing in England, Margaret was in France. To most people the Lancastrian cause might have seemed desperate, but the Queen knew no despair. She had landed at Sluys, August, 1463, with a very few attendents and in a very pitiful plight. She had no money and depended on Brèze for even the bread she ate.[4] She was hospitably received

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1. Hall's Chronicle. 265.
2. Ibid, 269; Waurin, Vol. V, 458.
3. Ibid, 281.
4. Fortescue, Governance of England, 63. (Plummer's Introduction.)

by the count of Charolois, who sent her on to his father, Philip, Duke of Burgundy, and in spite of her earlier attitude toward him, he received her kindly and gave her help and an honorable escort to her father's dominions at Saint-Michel in Barrois.[1] Here she remained for seven years, living the usual life of exiles, on a small pension granted by her father. She kept up a constant but feeble agitation with such foreign countries as she had access to, but was sometimes in such straits for money that she could hardly pay the messenger who went on her errands. Her son, to whom she was especially devoted, was always with her and she gave most of her time to his training and care.[2]

In 1468, her prospects became brighter, notwithstanding the fact that the seizure of some of her letters had ruined several of her partisans in England. Her old friend Charolois, now Duke of Burgundy, had gone over to the Yorkist side, having married Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV; but Louis XI of France had now become very friendly to her.[3] Through her efforts, Jasper Tudor was raising a revolt in Wales and her friends in the north had gathered strength and had been especially encouraged by the relations between King Edward and Warwick. King Edward's popularity was gradually vanishing as the more active of the politicians found every prize lavished on the Wydvilles, while the mass of the nation discovered that the peace and security of life and property were no better cared for under the new dynasty than they had been under the old.

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1. Waurin, Vol. V, 436.
2. Fortescue, Governance of England, 64-66. (Plummer's Introduction.)
3. Waurin, Vol. V., 559.

In 1469, she had collected troops with the help of Louis of France and while she was waiting at Harfleur to invade England, Warwick opportunely fled to France after a quarrel with King Edward,[1] to seek aid from the French King. He persuaded Louis of France and René, Margaret's father, to induce Margaret to combine their forces in opposition to King Edward. This was a delicate task as Warwick had brought terrible accusations against Margaret, and it was with the utmost difficulty that she was brought to consent to this unnatural alliance.[2] At last, she not only consented, but pardoned Warwick for what he had said and done. She always showed a superior judgment when her son's rights were concerned and would not let a personal matter stand in his way to the throne. Furthermore, she consented to the marriage of her son to Warwick's daughter, Anne Neville; the alliance also provided that Warwick was not to leave the war until King Henry, or his son, was restored to the full possession of the realm, and that Warwick should be chief councilor until Prince Edward came to man's estate.

Preparations were now made to invade England. The French King gave the allies money, ships and men, while the French navy defended the invaders against attacks from the Duke of Burgundy. King René also helped with men and munitions of war. It was decided that Warwick should go ahead into England, and if he should succeed, Margaret and her son Edward should follow with the reforce.[3]

When Warwick landed in England, he issued a proclamation

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1. Rymer's Foedera, XI, 654.
2. Hall's Chromicle, 281; Waurin, Vol. V, 608.
3. Waurin, Vol. V, 609.

in King Henry's name, calling on the people to restore Henry to the throne. So many responded to the call that in September, 1470, Henry was released from the Tower and restored to the throne, while Edward fled to Holland.[1]

When Henry was again in possession of his realm, he called in his high court of Parliament, November 26, 1470, in which King Edward was declared a traitor to his country and a usurper of the realm; all his goods were confiscated; like sentences were passed on all who had shared his guilt. Besides this, all the statutes made by Edward IV were revoked. The crown was again settled on Henry and his son, and in case of the extinction of the House of Lancaster, on Clarence, brother to King Edward.[2]

The Earl of Warwick was now supreme, not even Queen Margaret was there to dispute his sway. His rule was mild and was marked by no wholesale executions. But King Edward soon returned to England through the help of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Burgundy, and on April 14, 1471, his victory at Barnet resulted in the death of Warwick and the final captivity of Henry.[3]

During Henry's restoration, Margaret was in France, though Henry urged her to return to England early in 1471.[4] She made many attempts to cross the channel, but contrary winds made it impossible to do so. At last she landed at Weymouth, April 14, on the very

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1. Waurin, 611; Hall's Chronicle, 285.
2. Hall's Chronicle, 286.
3. Waurin, Vol. V, 661.
4. Rymer's Foedera, XI, 693.

day of the battle of Barnet, when Warwick was killed and Henry taken prisoner.[1]

When Margaret heard all these misfortunes, "she, like a woman all dismayed for fear, fell to the ground, her heart was pierced with sorrow, her speache was passed and all her spirits were tormented with melancholy. The calamity and misery of her time she detested and abhorred, her unstable fortune she cursed and bewailed the evil fate and destiny of her husband and she was so afflicted and caste into such an agony, that she preferred death before life. This Margaret might well consider and think that these evil adventures, chaunced to her for the most part for the unworthy death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, uncle to King Henry, although she were not the very occasion and provoker, yet she greatly offended in that she consented thereto and did not save his life, when she ruling above all others might conveniently have staied it. For surely if he had been alive and having the moderation and governance of the commonwealth, King Henry would never have wandered in so many hasardes and jeopardies of his life as he did."[2]

With her son Edward, Margaret took refuge in a cloister nearby, where they were soon found by the Duke of Somerset and other Lancastrian lords. When she saw them she was somewhat comforted and greatly revived, though she still despaired of doing anything, because she thought it best for her to return to France.

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1. Waurin, Vol. V, 664.

2. Hall's Chronicle, 297.

Margaret disapproved of their plan, to engage in battle at once, not that she feared for her life, but because she felt that the Yorkists wished the death of her son, the Prince, in whom all the hope of the Lancastrian family stood; besides he was all she had, her husgand being in captivity. In the end she listened to their advice and decided to risk a battle at once.[1]

A general rising followed in Cornwall, Devonshire and Dorset, all these counties giving their quota to increase her small force. She planned to cross the river Severn and join forces with Jasper Tudar in Wales before risking a battle with Edward, yet all the while attempting to throw him off his guard by a feint of an advance on London. But her scheme was a failure, and Edward placed his forces in order to prevent her from making an advance to the northwest. All along the way she received money and supplies from the country people. They welcomed her return, since they were disappointed in the new dynasty, which had failed to secure for them their lives and property. After an all night march she reached Gloucester only to find it held by Edward's forces, thus cutting off her retreat across the river which would have allowed them to escape into Wales. With no choice left, they marched on to Tewkesbury where they were forced through fatigue to stop and also to defend themselves from the approaching army of King Edward. The Lancastrians occupied a strong position but through an imprudent movement of the Duke of Somerset, they were utterly defeated and Prince Edward was slain on the field.[2]

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1. Waurin, Vol. V, 664-5.
2. Ibid, Vol. V, 666-8.

A few days after the battle, Margaret was found in a convent, but was taken to London and carried as a captive before her triumphant rival. The same night King Henry died in the Tower, nor are suspicions lacking that he was murdered. Margaret was held as a captive for the next five years but was well treated by King Edward through the influence of his Queen Elizabeth who remembered what Margaret had done for her. She was allowed a household of fifteen noble persons to serve her in the house of Lady Andley where she had her home.[1] She was, however, moved around from place to place, and lived in turn at London, at Windsor and at Wallingford where she had for her keeper an old friend, the Duchess of Suffolk, who lived not far off at Emelme.[2]

Her father finally secured her release when he ceded to Louis XI in 1475 his inheritance of Provence on the condition that the French King should ransom Margaret from Edward of England. By the treaty King Edward received fifty thousand crowns from King Louis for Margaret's freedom; she on her part signed a formal renunciation of all her rights her marriage in England had given her. She was taken to Rouen by Sir Thomas Montgomery and there given over to the French ambassadors, January, 1476.[3]

For a time she lived at the manor of Reculée in Anjou, which was given to her by her father; this was her girlhood home where she had received the ambassadors of England who came to request her hand for their sovereign. It was a very picturesque spot,

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1. Waurin, Vol. V, 669-74.
2. Paston Letters, III, 33.
3. Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. 36, 147.

yet it had no charms for her; she spent her time in painfully retracing the direful scenes of her past career and in passionate regrets for the bereavments she had undergone.

At the death of her father in 1480, she signed to Louis of France any reversionary rights which might fall to her from her father's estate, for a pension of six thousand livres and a home at Dampierre near Saumar. Here she lived the rest of her life in great poverty and isolation. She spent part of her time in reading, especially, the treatise composed at her request by Chastellain, which speaks of the misfortunes of the contemporary princes and nobles of her house and race. Time never seemed to lighten her sorrow nor lessen her grief. Her health soon gave way and she died August 25, 1482. She was buried in the Cathedral of Angers, in the tomb in which her parents were buried; but her last resting place is without epitaph or inscription; except that her portrait was painted on glass through the kindness of Louis XI, and placed in one of the cathedral windows.[1]

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1. Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. 36, 147.

CHAPTER V.

Such were the main events in the life of Margaret of Anjou, a life so marred by the vicissitudes of fortune that it offers us a story most strikingly interesting; the unconstitutional queen of England for more than a quarter of a century, first as queen consort, then supreme dictator of the King, in fact but not in name, and finally head of the House of Lancaster, not only wielding the scepter in Parliament but later directing the movements on the battle field.

Without doubt, Queen Margaret stands among the illustrious women of the fifteenth century, renowned for her strength of character, indomitable will, undying enthusiasm, brilliancy of intellect, physical charm, parental tenderness, and conjugal love; an English Queen, though a French woman, and perhaps for that reason too severely condemned by the English chroniclers, Hall and Holinshed.

What a wrong or at least biased characterization of Margaret of Anjou Shakespeare has given in the lines quoted from Henry VI at the beginning of the paper.[1]

> "'Tis beauty that doth oft make woman proud-
> But God, He knows thy share thereof is small."

Most authors definitely say, or at least imply that Margaret of Anjou was renowned both in France and in England for

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1. Paston Letters, 195.

her beauty and wit, and that all the misfortunes of her father had only given her an opportunity of displaying her lofty spirit and courage.

"'Tis virtue that doth make them most admired,
The Contrary doth make them wondered at."

Perhaps Shakespeare here has in mind the scandalous reports started by Warwick, in regard to unlawful relations between Margaret and Suffolk, and later between her and Somerset. Politics will fabricate anything and what is more natural than that the opposing party should resort to such wicked practices? Is it not more logical to suppose that the temporary insanity of the King prevented him from recognizing the Prince, at the time of his birth, rather than to conjecture that the boy was illegitimate?

"'Tis Government that makes them seem divine,
The want thereof makes thee abominable."

It is with this phase of her life that her brilliancy of intellect is most admirable. Although she came to England a child, still, domestic troubles in the court at home, her father's imprisonment, civil warfare and her unfriendly environment in general, had planted the seeds in her soul, which nurtured by the training of such an heroic mother as Isabella of Lorraine, were to mature on the soil of England. Henry VI had not the inclination to direct affairs of state, his interests were concerned more in the college he had just founded. Suffolk realized this and no doubt helped him to select as queen consort, one endowed with all those qualities which he needed to become a great King. So, accustomed to an unfriendly court at home, what more natural thing could happen than that Margaret, in a similar state of affairs in

England, should, when occasion offered, take up the reins of leadership? Quickness and genius, allied with immature judgment may, as in the case of Margaret, lead one to acquire bitter enemies. Even a mind of lesser strength than hers would have taken sides for her own against the opposing Yorkists.

The high esteem with which she was held in France on her leave-taking testifies to her amiability of character and general good-heartedness.[1] Her noble and queenly presence won over the Duke of Gloucester, the one who so vigorously opposed her coming, on her arrival in England.[2] Then, why should she have been suspected of plotting his death shortly after?

Her treatment of York at first shows that she preferred peace to war, by persuading King Henry to give him an important commission in Ireland far away from home. His appointment as defender and protector of the corwn at the time of Henry's first demented condition, naturally aroused her animosity, but her mind at that time was engrossed with womanly cares and her thoughts occupied with the new Prince of Wales. It was her party that claimed for her the rights of queen consort during the minority of the heir, but when she made the request it was denied her. It was at this Parliament that "Queen Margaret was first publicly censured for her interference in affairs of state, it being stated 'that the government as it was managed by the Queen, the Duke of Somerset and their friends, had been of late a great oppression

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1. Hall's Chronicle, 205.

2. Holinshed's, 207

and injustice' to the people."[1]

It was not until after the second battle of St. Albans, perhaps the cause of a recurrence of the King's dementia, that Margaret began making quiet preparations. The regal authority was at this period exercised in Henry's name by Queen Margaret and her council; yet the impetuosity of her temper betrayed her into the great imprudence of attempting to interfere with the jurisdiction of the Londoners, by sending the Dukes of Buckingham and Exeter with the royal commission into the city for the purpose of trying the parties concerned in a riot in which several were killed.[2]

The tender solicitude that she showed for her husband, her undaunted courage in upholding his rights and her natural genius must be admired. The English chroniclers have charged her with breaking the thanksgiving reconciliation, but this might well have been due no more to her insincerity than to the insincerity of the other side.

Her force of character is most clearly seen after the partial success of York, when King Henry signed away his son's right to the throne of England. Such news would be enough to overwhelm any woman. Her maternal love and pride aroused all her energies; she cast all considerations to the winds; her better

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1. A.Strickland quotes Rapin. Miss Strickland, it must be stated, is not always critical of her sources. (Strickland, Lives of the Queens of England. Vol. I, 647.)

2. Hall's Chronicle, 222.

feelings were converted into fierce impulses. She became an avenging Nemisis and formed plans beyond the power of woman; she met with defeats; she encountered victories; she kept a vigilant scruting upon the nobility, sought out minute information in all things, consumated most tactful schemes, and became the military leader of her partisans as well as their sovereign. She committed blunders which were never forgiven her, such as yielding Calais to the French and Berwick to the Scotch. She was censured because of cruelties committed in her name on the field of battle, as when she had York decapitated and his head placed on the gate at York. The fact that she allowed her men to plunder so ruthlessly stirred up the country against her. She pursued a losing game since the common people rose up in arms, but she had become desperate, for she was determined to give the crown of England to her son.

When she sought aid from the Duke of Burgundy, a former enemy, with what tact she brought him to her side! And later, when solicited by her detestable enemy Warwick to make another stand for the House of Lancaster, casting aside all personal grievances, she ignored the fact that he was the author of all her calamities and to all appearances forgave him and returned to England, for in Milton's phrase, "she was still in the lists of those that hope."

But the death of Warwick, the recapture of Henry in the Battle of Tewesbury, and the death of her son brought Margaret back to her native land, empty-handed to finish the life of a "heroine borne to strange fatalities." What more pitiable picture can be

imagined than the home-coming of the once beautiful and talented queen, bereft of husband and child?

It has been said she was the main cause of The Wars of the Roses; rather would we say in the words of the melancholy Dane, "The times were out of joint," The calamitous fate of Henry VI resulted not entirely from his marriage with Margaret of Anjou, but was brought about by a series of circumstances which inevitably prepared the way for the miseries of his reign, long before that unfortunate princess was born. The usurpation of the throne of England by Henry IV insured civil war when a representative of the older line found a favorable opportunity for presenting his claims, as was the case of Richard, Duke of York, who with his wealth and military superiority would have called forth an issue even if Henry VI had been more capable by nature and education for carrying on the contest.

Guizot says; "The history of England in the fifteenth century consists of two great epochs, the French wars without, those of the Roses within, the wars abroad and the wars at home. Scarcely was the foreign war terminated when the civil war commenced, long and fatally was it continued. While the Houses of York and Lancaster contested the throne, Henry's queen only delayed a contest which was sure to come, and her indominable will and courage supported the cause long after all others had given up."[1]

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1. Strickland, Lives of the Queens of England, Vol. I, 648.

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